

REMARKS

The following remarks are supplemental to the remarks of the response filed on September 16, 2003.

Upon entry of the above amendment, the specification and claims 1, 2, and 7 will have been amended, claim 8 will have been canceled, and newly presented claim 9 will have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-7 and 9 are currently pending. Claims 4-6 remain withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of claims 1-3, 7, and 9 in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

The specification has been amended to comport with the amendment to claim 1, described below. In particular, the first full paragraph on page 3 of the specification has been amended to recite --preparing molding dies for forming a cavity to unitarily form the complex lens as a single-piece element-- and molding dies including --a pair of single-piece unitarily formed mirror surface cores that form a plurality of lens surfaces of the complex lens at an incident side and a plurality of lens surfaces at an exit side, respectively--. It is respectfully submitted that the present amendment is fully supported by the application as filed, including the claims and drawings, and that no new matter has been entered thereby. In particular, support for the present amendment is present at least in the first paragraph of page 3 of the specification and in figures 1A, 1B, 2, and 3.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over FUKUSHIMA et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,999,142) in view of WATANABE (U.S. Patent No. 4,962,983).

Although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejection of claim 1 on this ground, nevertheless, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to clearly obviate the above noted ground of rejection in order to expedite prosecution of the present application. In this regard, Applicants note that FUKUSHIMA et al. and WATANABE fail to teach or suggest the subject matter claimed in amended claim 1. In particular, claim 1, as amended, sets forth a manufacturing method for a complex lens including, inter alia, "preparing molding dies for forming a cavity to unitarily form said complex lens as a single-piece element" and "wherein said molding dies include a pair of single-piece unitarily formed mirror surface cores that form a plurality of lens surfaces of said complex lens at an incident side and a plurality of lens surfaces at an exit side, respectively". As described in Applicants' specification, the stacked lens portions molded as a single piece element provide several advantages, including "reducing positional error among the lens portions". See particularly page 3, lines 9-14.

However, the FUKUSHIMA et al. method employs a mold in which a plurality of inner core elements 6, 7 are mounted to one of the mold parts 8, 9. In particular, claim 1 of the FUKUSHIMA et al. patent recites "mounting a plurality of inner core elements to one

of said mold parts”. Therefore, clearly, FUKUSHIMA et al. discloses mirror surface cores that are formed from several pieces. Thus, contrary to the Examiner’s assertion, the inner core elements of the molding parts are not formed as a “single-piece element”. However, even assuming, arguendo, that the plurality of inner core elements 6, 7 may fairly be read as a “single-piece element” *when mounted* on the mold parts 8, 9, the plurality of inner core elements mounted on the mold parts can not fairly be read as molding dies including “a pair of single-piece unitarily formed mirror surface cores”. Additionally, in the FUKUSHIMA et al. method, the rod lenses 16 are formed separately from each other in the preformed frame 3. Thus, contrary to the Examiner’s assertion, the rod lenses of the complex lens are not formed as a “single-piece element”. Further, even assuming, arguendo, that the plurality of rod lenses of the complex lens may fairly be read as a “single-piece element” *when mounted* in the frame 3, the plurality of rod lenses may not fairly be read as a complex lens that is “unitarily formed as a single-piece element”. The FUKUSHIMA et al. method does not include a complex lens manufacturing method including, inter alia, “preparing molding dies for forming a cavity to unitarily form said complex lens as a single-piece element” and “wherein said molding dies include a pair of single-piece unitarily formed mirror surface cores that form a plurality of lens surfaces of said complex lens at an incident side and a plurality of lens surfaces at an exit side”, as set forth in amended claim 1.

The WATANABE patent is directed to a laser optical apparatus including two distinct lenses formed separately from each other and spaced from each other in use. WATANABE fails to teach or suggest a complex lens manufacturing method including, inter alia, “preparing molding dies for forming a cavity to unitarily form said complex lens as a single-piece element” and “wherein said molding dies include a pair of single-piece unitarily formed mirror surface cores that form a plurality of lens surfaces of said complex lens at an incident side and a plurality of lens surfaces at an exit side”. Therefore, the WATANABE patent fails to cure the deficiencies of the FUKUSHIMA et al. method, and even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of FUKUSHIMA et al. and WATANABE have been properly combined, Applicants’ claimed method of manufacturing a complex lens would not have resulted from the combined teachings thereof.

Further, there is nothing in the cited prior art that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to make the modification suggested by the Examiner in the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over FUKUSHIMA et al. in view of WATANABE. Thus, the only reason to combine the teachings of FUKUSHIMA et al. and WATANABE results from a review of Applicants’ disclosure and the application of impermissible hindsight. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over FUKUSHIMA et al. in view of WATANABE is improper for all the above reasons and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that dependent claims 2, 3, and 7 which are at least patentable due to their dependency from claim 1 for the reasons noted above, recite additional features of the invention and are also separately patentable over the prior art of record based on the additionally recited features.

Applicants submit that none of the references of record, considered alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicants' invention as recited in newly submitted claim 9.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all the rejections, and an early indication of the allowance of claims 1-3, 7, and 9.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present amendment is proper and that none of the references of record, considered alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicants' invention as recited in claims 1-3, 7, and 9. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Accordingly, consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present amendment and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

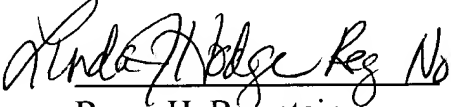
P21351.A05

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Applicants note that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
Daisuke KOREEDA et al.

 Reg No 47348
Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

September 24, 2003
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191